



The Book of Acts: *Holy Spirit Adventures*

Passage: Acts 8:1-25

The Book of Acts - A call to see the Spirit move again and again in every generation

Introduction

This passage begins with persecution. Pastor Sam read the quote "The Sanhedrin silenced a voice that was upsetting a city, but, without realizing it, they were awakening a voice that would upset an empire." He said, "That is the way God works. Throughout the book of Acts, we will see how God uses opposition to advance his cause." Discuss how you react to both the excitement and the challenge of these narratives.

Enjoy the Table Talk video with Pastor Sam [here](#).

Unpacking the Sermon

1. Persecution – "a great persecution broke out... and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria." Acts 8:1b

Ordinary Christians were scattered. They didn't waste the pain of the persecution but used it as an opportunity to spread the word – "*preaching the word wherever they went.*" (v.4) How could those early believers maintain such boldness? In what ways is this a fulfillment of their prayer for boldness in Acts 4:23-31?

2. Progression – "Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there." Acts 8:5

Philip's ministry in Samaria exemplifies the progression of the Gospel. As a deacon, he was *known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom.* (Acts 6:3) How is Philip a model for us?

3. Poison – Simon "offered them money..." "Give me also this ability" Acts 8:18

Pastor Sam said, "Whenever God wants to do something significant, the enemy works often from within (internally in the church or community) to disrupt, damage or destroy the purpose of God." In Simon, we see the poison of the love of money. Consider the stories of Judas, Ananias and Sapphira, and Simon in the light of 1 Timothy 6:9-10. How is money a poison in our day and age?

4. Proclamation – “Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages.” Acts 8:25b

Samaria had typically been off-limits to pious Jews. Yet here the gospel is widely preached. Acts is a record of outreach to an unusual variety of people – a magician, an Ethiopian Eunuch, a religious terrorist named Saul, and Cornelius, a Roman centurion. Pastor Sam said, “God is challenging us to reach people we would not normally talk to or want to talk to at times. Jesus said he didn’t come for the righteous but for the sick, broken, and hurting. He was a friend of sinners.” This is an example for us to follow. Pastor Sam asked, “Do you have any friends who are not Christians? And are you living out the gospel for them?” How do you respond?

APPLICATION – How are you being stirred to grow and change? Discuss these ideas.

Pastor Sam suggested four steps to deal with the poison of money:

1. Deal with a selfish heart.
2. Deal with your heart when grief attacks after you give.
3. Develop a generous heart.
4. Develop a grateful heart.

We were also challenged about proclamation:

1. Share the gospel with someone you’ve never talked to before.
2. Do a random act of kindness to a stranger this week like a coffee, or gift card.
3. Examine your heart, your priorities, and how you use money in your life.
4. Will you help to build bridges with new communities and new people through the power of the Spirit?

Prayer: Lord, our God, help us to walk with you on the pathway to be like you and to live out our mission in today’s world. Bind us to all men and women of our time so that together we may bring the good news to the ends of the earth. Open our hearts and our communities to the needy, the afflicted, the oppressed. May we radiate the Living Christ and transform our lives in the hope of the resurrection through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Have questions about the sermon? Email us: groups@sanctuschurch.com